



Administrative Policies and Procedures: 11.4

Subject:	Family Functional Assessment Process
Authority:	TCA 37-5-105; 37-5-106
Standards:	DCS Practice Model Standards - 2-105B; 2-109B; 2-110B; 5-201; 5-204; 6-400; 6-507B; 6-508B; 6-513C; 8-101; 8-206B; 10-101; 11-101; 11-103; 11-302A; 11-307A; 11-310B; 11-315B; COA – AS-2; CM-3; CPS-7; FC-2; GLS-3; KC-2; RTX-3; YIL-4
Application:	To All Department of Children's Services Employees

Policy Statement:

The Department of Children's Services shall use the Family Functional Assessment (FFA) process to engage children and families in a professional helping relationship to identify strengths and underlying needs and to build the child and family team.

Purpose:

The Family Functional Assessment is a process and an assessment tool designed to help guide staff in gathering information on the past, present and future of a family by (1) continuously evaluating the family's strengths, underlying needs, concerns, and challenges, (2) always building supportive teams with children and families which will last beyond agency involvement, and (3) collaboratively developing individualized plans utilizing family strengths and solutions.

Procedures:

A. Family Functional Assessment Process Manual	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The <i>Documentation of the Family Functional Assessment Process Manual</i> will aid staff in the assessment of the child and family. It can be used to identify questions for interviewing families. However, interviews should not be exclusive to questions from the manual.2. The Office of Child Safety will develop, maintain, and revise the manual annually or as often as necessary.
B. Assessment process	<ol style="list-style-type: none">3. Gathering Information<ol style="list-style-type: none">a) Information can be obtained through the use of:<ul style="list-style-type: none">♦ Interviews,♦ Observations,♦ Records checks,♦ Collateral reports,

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Evaluations, ◆ Pictorial tools, ◆ Photographs, ◆ DCS assessment tools, and ◆ Other appropriate evidence-based tools. <p>b) DCS staff shall interact with families and children in a strengths-based, culturally responsive, family-centered manner using culturally competent, interpersonal skills demonstrating genuineness, empathy, and respect for the family and individuals in accordance with DCS policy 31.7. Engaging Families.</p> <p>c) When interviewing members of the child and family team, it is important for staff to “hear the family story.” Interviews with family members should be driven by the information that the person has to offer and should not be driven by questions on a questionnaire. Interviews will seek the underlying issues that result in surface behaviors or problems.</p> <p>4. Analyzing Information</p> <p>a) Information will be analyzed by staff and the family to identify signs of safety (strengths) and signs of risk (needs and concerns).</p> <p>b) During supervisory case conferences, staff can receive assistance with further analysis of information.</p> <p>5. Drawing Conclusions and Making Decisions</p> <p>Conclusions and decisions about family strengths, needs, and service delivery are made in conjunction with the child and family team.</p>
C. Recording the FFA process and ongoing assessment	<p>1. Form CS-0777, Family Functional Assessment II, will be used to document the ongoing family assessment information. Child Protective Services Investigators (CPSI) will initiate a Family Functional Assessment (FFA) within thirty (30) calendar days of case assignment. FSWs will initiate and/or continue documentation for custody cases. CPSAs will initiate documentation for non-custody assessment cases. Court Liaisons may initiate documentation if deemed appropriate by regional leadership.</p> <p>2. The FFA will be updated on at least a quarterly basis throughout the life of the case.</p>
D. Probation cases	FFA information for youth on probation will be documented within twenty (20) working days of case assignment in preparation for the development of the Individual Program Plan (IPP) with the child and family.
E. CPS transfer to FSW or case	1. CPSIs and CPSAs will update the FFA within five (5) business days of the date of transfer to the FSW. The updated document will be electronically sent to the

closure	FSW for continuation of the assessment process. 2. If the case is not transferred, the CPSI or CPSA will update the FFA prior to case closure.
F. Supervisor review	Team Leaders will conduct a monthly review of one FFA per case worker. The focus of the review will include the timely initiation of the document, identification of service needs, use of assessment tools, and continued assessment of permanency progress. The purpose of the review will be to promote high-quality assessments and timely and appropriate updates.
I. Use of pictorial tools	1. Pictorial tools include: a) Genogram ; b) Timeline ; c) Family map , and d) Ecomap 2. Pictorial Tools assist the staff in conducting a family-centered, strengths-based, culturally-inclusive assessment. These tools offer visual representations of how families view themselves and the outside world and help families see their strengths and needs. 3. At least one pictorial tool should be used during the assessment process.

Forms:	<u><i>CS-0777, Family Functional Assessment II</i></u>
---------------	---

Collateral documents:	<u><i>Documentation of the Family Functional Assessment Process Manual</i></u>
------------------------------	---

Glossary:	
Term	Definition
Assessment:	The on-going process of organizing and analyzing the information gathered.
Child Protective Services Investigator (CPSI):	A DCS term used to identify the person under the CPS Multiple Response System (MRS) who investigates CPS allegations of severe abuse. This person is principally responsible for investigating allegations to uncover abuse, identify victims and perpetrators, and determine findings related to the allegations.
Child Protective Services Assessment Worker (CPSA):	A DCS term used to identify the person under the CPS Multiple Response System (MRS) who works with families who are involved in low- to moderate-risk CPS cases. This person is principally responsible for ensuring the safety of the child, while assessing and engaging the entire family in order to identify services and supports that can address the family's needs.
Ecomap:	A map that provides a visual image of family members who reside in the household and the formal and informal resources in the community available to them.
Family Functional Assessment Process	An ongoing process that uses the case management skill of family engagement to gather and analyze information and identify family strengths and underlying needs, so that the family and its supportive child and family team can make knowledgeable decisions that will result in safety and permanency.
Family Map:	A map that provides a visual image of the aspects of a family system. The family will identify who resides in the household and their current system dynamics. A) Which family members hold the most and least power; b) How parent-child boundaries are acted out in the family; and c) How the various members of that family system interact and relate to one another.
Family Service Worker:	A DCS term used to identify the position previously known as the DCS Case Manager or Home County Case Manager. This person is principally responsible for the case and has the primary responsibility of building, preparing, supporting and maintaining the Child and Family Team as the child and family move to permanence.
Functional:	Refers to the things that are and are not working for the child and family.
Genogram:	A visual representation of generations within a family, charted vertically through time. A series of symbols, i.e., squares, circles or triangles used to depict male and female family members in charting the structure of a family. Triangles are used when the sex of a member is not known. The family will identify quality of relationships between family members. This tool assists the child and family team in identifying resources within the family.
Timeline:	The family will identify significant events, key dates and provide a brief description of the event, including who was present. Family members are asked to include the most significant events, especially those that are highs and lows. Reflecting on the timeline

	can help the family see how they have responded to those events. It will help them examine the variety of ways they have been influenced by events that have been both positive and negative in their lives. This tool can help clarify strengths and help validate the skills that were used to respond to some of the most difficult issues in the family's life.
--	---